

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

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INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2578

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PDEV RH US UK

SUBJECT: OWEN/YOUNG SATURDAY MEETING WITH FRONTLINE

REF: LUSAKA 2571

1. OWEN, YOUNG, AND PARTY MET WITH PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERS NKOME AND MUGABE AT THE RESIDENCE OF THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR TWO HOURS SATURDAY MORNING. ALSO PRESENT WERE HAMADZIRIPI, MUZENDE, MUDZI(ZANU) SALUNDIKA MADZIMBAMUTO AND JOHN NKOMO(ZAPU)

2. OWEN MADE A LENGTHY PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSAL DESCRIBING THE LEGAL BASIS AND PROCESS FOR THE TRANSITION PERIOD AND CONSTITUTION. HE GAVE A DETAILED EXPOSITION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION DESCRIBED THE ZIMBABWE DEVELOPMENT FUND AND THEN TURNED TO WHAT HE ADMITTED WAS THE MOST SENSITIVE AND DIFFICULT ISSUE THAT OF THE  
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TRANSITION AGREEMENT. HE DESCRIBED THE LAW AND ORDER ROLES OF THE POLICE FORCE, UN FORCE, RHODESIAN DEFENSE FORCE (RD) MINUS UNACCEPTABLE ELEMENTS AND THE NEW UNITED ZIMBABWE NATIONAL ARMY(ZNA) THE LAST WILL BE THE INDEPENDENCE ARMY AND THE ONLY FORCE IN EXISTENCE ON INDEPENDENCE DAY. OWEN PLACED MAJOR EMPHASIS ON URGING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT MILITARY COMMANDERS TO AGREE TO ENTER

INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE RDF FIELD COMMANDERS, THE UN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE AND DESIGNATED RESIDENT COMMISSIONER ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TRANSITION PERIOD AND FORMATION OF THE NEW ARMY. HE AND YOUNG NOTED THAT THE PROVISIONS IN THE PROPOSAL FOR THESE ARRANGEMENTS WERE DELIBERATELY VAGUE IN ORDER TO PERMIT THIS NEGOTIATION TO WORK OUT DETAILS.

3. NKOMO SOUGHT TO CLARIFY A NUMBER OF POINTS. HE WAS REASSURED THAT THE PROPOSAL WAS A BRITISH PLAN SUPPORTED BY THE U.S. AND THAT THE DISCUSSIONS WERE WITH THE BRITISH THE U.S. "SITTING IN". HE WARNED THAT NOW THAT WE WERE ADDING THE UN ANY MEMBER MIGHT ALSO ASK TO TAKE PART THOUGH WE HOPED THEY WOULD NOT. SUPPORTING THE POINT MUGABE MENTIONED HIS CONCERN OVER SUPER POWER CONFLICT AND BUILDING OF U.S. POWER IN THE AREA. HE WAS CONCERNED THE US MIGHT NOT JUST PRESS THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND RHODESIANS FOR A SETTLEMENT BUT EXERT INFLUENCE AFTER INDEPENDENCE. THE FRONT WANTS TO BELIEVE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A TRANSFORMATION IN WASHINGTON WITH THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION BUT ADDED THAT HE WOULD NOT LAST FOREVER.

4. NKOMO WAS SATISFIED WITH OWEN'S ASSURANCE THAT THE PROPOSED MILITARY DISCUSSIONS ON TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS AND THE INDEPENDENCE ARMY WOULD TAKE PLACE BEFORE INSTITUTING A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT. OWEN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE DETAILS OF THE ARRANGEMENTS WORKED OUT WOULD NEED TO BE CONFIDENTIAL

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SATISFACTORY TO BOTH TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND TO HIM BEFORE HE COULD RECOMMEND INSTALLATION OF THE TRANSITION GOVERNMENT.

5. BOTH OWEN AND YOUNG EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF RECEIVING FIRM AFRICAN SUPPORT IN THE UN. EVEN IF SMITH REJECTED THE PROPOSAL, OWEN SAID IT WOULD NOT END THERE. IF THEY FAILED TO GIVE A SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION THERE WOULD BE CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE BROUGHT TO BEAR. IN RESPONSE TO MUGABE'S QUESTION HE NOTED THAT A SIX-MONTH TRANSITION PERIOD COULD CONCEIVABLY END IN INDEPENDENCE BY THE MIDDLE OF 1978.

6. THE DISCUSSION TURNED TO THE TRANSITION PERIOD FORCES. MUGABE NOTED WE WERE ASKING HIM TO ACCEPT SMITH'S POLICE FORCE, ARMY AND AIR FORCE AS WELL AS SMITH'S CIVIL ADMINISTRATION. TOGETHER THESE CANNOT HELP BUT HAVE AN EFFECT ON THE MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER AND FAIRNESS OF THE ELECTIONS. OWEN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT COMPROMISES WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE AND POINTED OUT THAT THE UN POLICE LIAISON AND ARMED FORCES WOULD ENFORCE IMPARTIALITY. BOTH NKOMO AND MUGABE PRESSED FOR PRECISE INFORMATION ON

DISPOSITION OF THE LIBERATION FORCES(NKOMO OBJECTED TO THE TERM "ARMIES" IN THE PLURAL". OWEN ATTEMPTED TO AVOID THE DETAIL, NOTING THAT ALL ARRANGEMENTS WERE SUBJECT TO SUGGESTED NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN MILITARY COMMANDERS. NKOMO DEPRECATED THE POLICE FORCES IMPARTIALITY AND NOTED THAT IT WAS A MAJOR ELEMENT OF OPPRESSION FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW AND MUGABE MENTIONED (WITHOUT NKOMO'S SUPPORT) THAT HE COULD PROVIDE 40,000 TRAINED POLICEMEN FOR THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONERS USE. MUGABE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT WOULD TAKE A WHILE TO CHANGE THE ATTITUDES OF THE RDF. YOUNG SAID THAT IF WE HAD WANTED SMITH OR HIS ARMY TO REMAIN, WE WOULD STAY SWAY AND LET HIM AND SITHOLE WORK OUT A DEAL: HE BELIEVED WE MUST MOVE AHEAD PROMPTLY TO AVOID THIS.

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7. THE CONVERSATION TURNED TO THE INDEPENDENCE ARMY. NKOMO QUESTIONED OWEN ON DISMANTLING THE SMITH FORCES, A PHRASE WHICH OWEN CLEARLY TRIED TO AVOID USING (TO PROTECT US FROM PRESS HEADLINES WHICH WOULD DESTROY OUR POSITION IN SALISBURG AND PRETORIA) NKOMO OBJECTED TO ANY CONSIDERATION OF DISARMING THE LIBERATION FORCES, TO WHICH OWEN AGREED. MUGABE ASKED ABOUT THE PROPORTIONS BETWEEN LIBERATION FORCES AND RDF IN THE ZNA AND WHETHER ELEMENTS OR INDIVIDUALS FROM THE RDF WOULD BE BROUGHT IN. OWEN SAID THIS HAD TO BE LEFT FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS AND HE NOTED THAT IF THE CEASEFIRE HELD, THE PRESIDENT COMMISSIONER WOULD HAVE NO NEED FOR FORCES OTHER THAN THE POLICE AND THE UN. THE INDEPENDENT ARMY MUST BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE NEW GOVERNMENT. IT MUST REFLECT THE CHANGED REALITIES WHICH MUGABE HAD DESCRIBED AS THE "PEOPLES ARMY" REFLECTING THE "PEOPLES POWER". OWEN STRESSED THAT THE ARMY MUST BE IMPARTIAL AND ACCEPTABLE TO ANY CANDIDATE.

8. NKOMO WARNED THAT PUBLICATION OF THE PROPOSAL WOULD MAKE IT APPEAR THAT THE PF IS BEING REQUIRED TO MOVE TOWARDS ITS ADVERSARY'S POSITION. IF THE PROPOSAL CONTAINED UNACCEPTABLE PROVISIONS ON LAW AND ORDER MATTER, THEY WOULD HAVE TO ATTACK THEM. HE PARTICULARLY OBJECTED TO ANY SETTLEMENT WHICH ALLOWED THE RHODESIAN DEFENCE FORCE TO REMAIN IN EXISTENCE. OWEN EXPLAINED THAT THE RDF COULD NOT BE DISBANDED BY TRANSITION DAY AS NKOMO HAD SUGGESTED THOUGH HE WAS WILLING THAT CREATION OF THE NEW ZNA AT AN EARLIER POINT BE DISCUSSED BETWEEN COMMANDERS.

9. AT THE END, MUGABE REQUESTED THE COURTESY OF A COPY OF THE PROPOSALS BUT OWEN DEMURRED, EXPLAINING THAT HE COULD NOT DO SO THIS FAR IN ADVANCE, THE PUBLICATION DATE HAVING NOW SLIPPED BECAUSE HIS VISIT TO SALISBURY HAD BEEN POST

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PONED UNTIL THURSDAY. HE PROMISED, HOWEVER THEY WOULD HAVE A COPY BEFORE THEY WERE PUBLISHED. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD REFLECT ON TODAY'S DISCUSSION AND WE WOULD MEET AGAIN ON SUNDAY MORNING.

10. THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE MEETING WAS CONSTRUCTIVE BUT SOMETIMES INTENSE. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT MADE CLEAR THAT THEY WERE EXPLORING OUR PROPOSAL. LATER THEY MAY MAKE THEIR OWN, BUT THEY CLEARLY SHOWED WILLINGNESS TO GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO OUR PROPOSAL.

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## Message Attributes

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